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Nearly all the manufacturing and trading Towns that are concern'd with America have now petition'd Parliament to do something for healing the Differences that threaten Ruin to their Commerce. Administration, which has appear'd to stagger several times within these two Months, must have given way before this time ; but have been supported chiefly by Accounts from America that all was fluctuating there, and that a little longer Perseverance would triumph over the Factions, as they are called, and bring the whole Continent to full and *unconditional* Submission. A Bill has therefore pass'd the Commons, to deprive New England of its Fishery, as well as its Trade, and a new Bill is ordered in, to extend the Restraints on Trade to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina. Of New York they have great Hopes, and some of North Carolina, which Colonies are therefore omitted. All the Colonies, but those of New England, it is given out, may still make Peace for themselves, by acknowledging the Supreme unlimited Power of Parliament : But those are absolutely to be *conquered* : After which possibly they may obtain a Quebec Constitution. — More Troops are accordingly preparing to go over. — And yet with all this *Face of Resolution*, it is certain that the Ministers are far from being cordially united in these Measures ; that some of them tremble for their Places, and all for the Event as it relates to the Publick. While wise Observers are confident, that if America can hold strictly to its Non Consumption Agreement another Year, it is impossible they can stand the universal Clamour which begins to thicken round their Heads, and that they must therefore be overthrown, and routed ; and the Friends of America come into Administration. It is indeed evident that the present Set are apprehensive of this, since, to secure themselves against the Danger of Impeachment, they take care in every Step to get Parliament to *lead* and *advise* the Measures to be taken : Contrary to the ancient Practice of the Executive Power in taking its Measures as Occasion requir'd, and depending on their Rectitude for the future Approbation of Parliament.

I flatter myself that neither New York nor any other Colony will be cajol'd into a Separation from the common Interest. Our only Safety is in the firmest Union, and keeping strict Faith with each other. If any Colony suffers itself to be detach'd from the common Cause by the artful Management of Ministers, that Colony will first incur the Detestation of the rest ; and when that is become the Case, and none can be concern'd at any ill Usage it may receive, it will on some Pretence or other be treated just as roughly as the others whom it had so basely abandon'd.

With great Esteem, I am, Sir, Your Most
obedient humble Servant

[B. FRANKLIN.]

Charles Thompson Esq^r

3. *William Jackson on Conditions in France, 1794.*

WILLIAM JACKSON, the writer of this letter, was born in England in 1759, but was brought to Charleston, South Carolina, when a

child. He served in the Revolutionary army until 1781, when he accompanied John Laurens as secretary on his special mission to France. On his return he was on General Washington's staff for a short time, and was then appointed assistant secretary of war, 1782-1783, under General Lincoln. At the close of the war he visited Europe again, and shortly after his return was made secretary to the Federal Convention of 1787. He served as President Washington's private secretary during his first administration and then spent two years in Europe, the accompanying letter being written during this period. On his return he was appointed surveyor of the port of Philadelphia, an office which he held until his removal by Jefferson in 1806. He died in Philadelphia in 1828.

The original letter, fifteen pages in length, is now in the State Department, Bureau of Indexes and Archives, Despatches, England, Vol. 3. It was sent to Edmund Randolph from London by Thomas Pinckney, then our minister to England, who says in his despatch of May 5, 1794:

Major Jackson wrote me a letter from Paris containing information relating to the situation of affairs in France. You have undoubtedly the most accurate intelligence on that subject, but as it is possible this letter may contain some details you have not before seen I send it for your perusal.

WILLIAM JACKSON TO THOMAS PINCKNEY.

PARIS, April — 1794.

My dear Sir,

Having received no acknowledgement of four letters which I have written to you since my arrival in France, I conclude they have not reached you — Discouraging as this supposition is, I have determined once more to attempt a transmission of such intelligence as I suppose may be personally interesting to yourself, and, through you, useful to our Country.

France at this moment exhibits such scenes as the pencil of Salvator-Rosa would have been well employed to delineate — abounding in light and shade, which is at once splendid and awful. To use the language of a more modern artist, and one fonder of *gilding* than Salvator, France is in truth “an armed Nation” — her firmness and exertions seem well proportioned to the resistance, which her situation requires, and far exceed the expectation, which our limited acquaintance with the power and resources of such a Nation, resolved to be free, could have excited.

No longer resembling Venus attended by the Graces, she now represents Minerva followed by the Fates.

You must pardon this imagery, it is really necessary to convey an idea of facts, or to describe the change, which has here taken place — indeed it is only by what, in common parlance, would be considered as extravagant hyperbole, that one can express the situation of this most extraordinary People.

Wherever you move, or to whatever quarter your attention is turned, nothing meets the view but warlike preparation — Every consideration is sacrificed to public exigence, every contribution of property or service, which the public necessity requires, appears to be cheerfully made, and in the few instances, where reluctance may exist, terror supplies the absence of patriotism, and operates its full effect—¹

Age and infancy are employed in extracting from the earth (and, by a late refinement in chemistry, from vegetables) the thunders which youth and manhood are to direct,² while the cares of domestic life are entirely devolved on the female part of the society.

Fifteen armies, forming a force, which I do not think exaggerated, of 1200,000 men,³ are now in the actual service of the Republic — and it has been surmised that a part of the second requisition would be made before the opening of the campaign.

Should this additional effort be deemed necessary, the coalesced nations of Europe must unquestionably yield to the momentum of an individual power, exceeding in numbers and array all that the world has hitherto exhibited.

Perplexed by the variety of interesting objects, which attract my attention, I am really at a loss where to begin in giving you the details of these formidable preparations.

The first requisition has been carried into complete effect, that is to say all the unmarried men of this extensive nation from the age of 18 to 25, whatever their situation or fortune (for neither money nor substitutes would exempt them from service) have joined the several armies of the Republic which they have augmented with a force of 600,000.—These levies have been incorporated with the ancient corps, and have been under a strict discipline for several months.⁴ The Cavalry has been so considerably increased as to require that the swords exceeding thirty

¹ *Le Moniteur Universel* for February 2 and 3, 1794, contains a report by Barère in which an account of this warlike activity is given with much spirit. Cf. also Taine, *Revolution*, III. 54–56, and von Sybel, *French Revolution* (Perry's translation, London, 1869), III. 312.

² Barère's report, cited above, contains a full account of this manufacture of gunpowder. Evidently it was an important subject, for the *Moniteur* contains many reports of the manufacture of saltpeter in various parts of France. Cf. also Ure's *Dictionary of Arts, etc.* (edited by Hunt), under potash, nitrate of, where is found the statement that 2,000 tons of saltpeter were annually produced in France from artificial niter beds.

³ In the report of Barère, cited above, is the exclamation, "Une trêve avec douze cents mille républicains sous les armes!" In Jomini's *Histoire des Guerres de la Révolution* (Brussels, 1840), I. 9, is a table purporting to give the strength of the French armies on April 15, 1794. In the text the author states that there were nearly 1,200,000 soldiers but only about "700,000 combattants étaient en situation de prendre partout l'offensive". Von Sybel, however, does not believe that the French forces were nearly so large as represented; he places the total at the end of 1793 at 600,000 and the next spring at 871,000. *French Revolution*, III. 209 and note; 317 and note.

⁴ This was the decree of August 23, 1793. Von Sybel does not believe that this new levy was so readily incorporated in the old corps. By the decree of November 22, 1793, some of the difficulties attendant upon the levy were provided for. Von Sybel, III. 306–309; 311–313. Cf. Taine, III. 56.

inches in blade should be taken from the Infantry for their use. The augmentation is upwards of 50,000, and the remounted exceeds 30,000 — The whole force in Cavalry being at least 100,000 — So that in this arm, which, during the last campaign, was the weakest part of their composition, I am persuaded the french will be superior to the allies.¹ The artillery, so formidable in the last campaign, has received an addition of two thousand pieces for field service, and, judging from its former effect, must I think be absolutely irresistible.

The fuel which is to nourish this immense volcano, is, as I have already intimated to you, prepared by those hands, which are otherwise unable to serve their country — and, under the direction of persons, skilled in the process, saltpetre is produced in astonishing quantity — I have daily opportunity of observing its product in the several sections of Paris, and the operation is the same throughout the Republic.²

The public founderies and manufactories of small arms aided by the mechanics, who work in metals, and who for this purpose are all in requisition, are constantly employed, and furnish immensely.³

And yet amidst all this din and preparation of arms the Country is more carefully and extensively cultivated than in any former period — You will ask by whom? By old men, by women, and the youth of both sexes under the age of 18 — This I can assure you, from personal observation, wherever I have travelled not a single spot is neglected — the very avenues and approaches to the Chateaux are ploughed — even the walks of the Tuilleries are sown and planted — and no country presents a more promising appearance, in agriculture, than France does at this moment.

It has become a public care with the several Municipalities to plant those grounds, which were formerly appropriate to pleasurable purposes, with useful vegetables and to this end regular institutions are established—

The value of the potatoe is known and sufficiently appreciated to remove every apprehension of want — Indeed so promising is the grain now in the ground that I am persuaded, from my information of the present state of their granaries, the quantity on hand and the ensuing crop will furnish an advance of provision for at least two years.

You may be assured the idea of starving France is as unfounded as it is inhuman — The variety of soil and climate in this extensive country reduce the chance of a general failure in their crops to a very remote possibility, and the invigorating energies of property and freedom have more than balanced the deductions from their agriculture occasioned by the call of their Peasantry to the frontiers — Indeed a very considerable proportion of their farming was always done by the Women of France, who still continue to cultivate the ground.

Take a single illustration of my supposition that their granaries are

¹ See von Sybel, III. 309. In *Le Moniteur Universel* for January 20, 1794, is found the decree providing for the transfer of the long sabers.

² See page 527.

³ See Barère's report, cited above. Cf. also Taine, III. 56.

well stocked — the price of bread in Paris at this moment is not half as much as in London — True it is browner, but it is equally nutritious.

Extensive manufactures of useful fabrics continue to flourish, and even the most refined articles of luxury are not neglected — Of the former I have attentively observed the cloth manufacture at Abbeville, which is in full vigour — and of the latter I have visited the Gobelins, where the most exquisite productions of the needle and the shuttle still continue to charm and astonish. This last is continued as a public establishment—

Even the palaces and pleasure grounds of the ci-devant royalty are respected as national property, and as such are carefully preserved. The greater part of the furniture has been removed from Versailles — some of the paintings remain — Those by the best Masters have been sent to the gallery of the Louvre, which is now the National museum, and exceeds in exhibition any other collection in Europe. It is under the direction of a Committee appointed to protect the fine arts, and is maintained in the very best style.

The late Queen's favorite residence of St Cloud remains as when she occupied it — The paintings will be sent to the museum, and the furniture will be sold.

In remarking on the agriculture and manufactures I have digressed from the subject of the public force to which I return.

The operations of the northern army appear to engage the greatest degree of attention, and, from its composition as well as its situation, this part of their force seems destined to the most arduous and important service.

Including the detachments on the side of Dunkirk and the garrisons, which, without risk to their posts, may be called into field service with the main body, I do not suppose this army amounts to less than 254,000 men — composed nearly in the following manner.

Brigaded Infantry	170,000
Light Corps	20,000
Cavalry	44,000
Brigaded Artillery	15,000
Artillery attached to Corps	5,000
	<hr/> 254,000 ¹

In addition to this immense force, no less formidable by the decided superiority of their artillery, the improved state of their discipline, arms, and oeconomical arrangements of supplies, than by their numbers, the army of the Moselle, which may be estimated at 70,000, may, by a rapid movement to its left, be brought into full co-operation, and at a very short notice, with the army of the North — for experience has demonstrated that they are capable of forming these sudden junctions by transporting their troops in carriages.

¹ Jomini places the strength of this army at the end of March, 1794, at "plus de 160,000 hommes disponibles". *Guerres de la Révolution*, II. 10. Von Sybel estimates it at 148,000, exclusive of the 74,000 men in the fortresses that protected the position of the army. *French Revolution*, III, 317.

That they are disposed to effect whatever a profuse application of money can accomplish, must be admitted — and that the means are in their power cannot be denied.

Their treasury is at this time by far the richest in Europe — perhaps more abundant than all the rest of Europe — and immoderate as their explanation appears, the sources of their supplies seem but to encrease with the streams that flow from them — The taxes that are now collected, with the donations, church property, and money received for Emigrants estates, form altogether a most inordinate mass.¹

On this subject it is also fair to remark that the Persons, who direct their fiscal arrangements, have been long enough in office to give to them all the advantages that result from method and established order — Of this a very strong proof was given some days ago by Cambon in his report on the state of their finances — He therein asserts (which unfoundedly he dared not to do) that a diminution had been effected in their expenditure of 170 millions per month — leaving the actual disbursement about 54 millions sterling [per] annum.²

Enormous as this sum may appear it is not immoderate compared with their resources — for, however extraordinary, it is true that, including the estates of the crown, the clergy, and the Emigrants one third part of the whole property of France is in confiscation — Such had been the tendency of the ancient regime to absorb and concentrate the national wealth in the hands of a few.

This fact is well understood by the men of property who have remained in France, and the reflections, which arise from it, have fully decided them to go with the revolution and to support it at all hazards. They are now aware of the worst that can happen to them under the republic, and they know full well that the confiscated property is more than competent to the expences that have been, or may be incurred to maintain the war — Whereas a counter-revolution would not only place the expences of the war to the charge, but prostrate the remainder of their property to the indemnity of those who have emigrated.

These influential considerations of property by which the more wealthy part of the people, now in France, are actuated, aided by the enthusiasm of some, the fears of others, and the resentments of all against their external enemies, have not only subdued the spirit of revolt, and condensed the public opinion in favor of the revolution, but appear to me to have decided the nation literally to adhere to their declaration to “live free or die.”

This reasoning, on a first view, may seem to be somewhat dogmatic — but compared with facts, and analysed by the test of experience, it will I think be found as true, as it may seem positive.

¹ Cf. von Sybel, III. 226–234.

² Cambon made an announcement in the Convention as follows: “Eh bien! le résultat des dépenses contre lequel nous nous élevions avec raison avant que le gouvernement eût un point central s'élevait de 390 à 400 millions par mois; il ne donne plus que 170 à 180 millions.” *Le Moniteur Universel*, March 24, 1794, page 742. Cf. von Sybel's comments, *French Revolution*, III. 310–311.

I would now state the respective strength and composition of the other armies of the Republic — but as their operations are not likely to be equally interesting or decisive with that of the North, I have been at less pains to obtain particular information respecting them : That which is intended to act against Spain, will, I think, be the next efficient in force, and impressive in its operations.

The direction of their military measures is said to be confided to a Committee of Officers of high professional talents, and distinguished service — Two of them I understand will go to the army of the North — the others will remain in Paris.

Besides this Board of Officers there are Commissioners from the Convention with each of the armies, who superintend the oeconomy of their staff arrangements, and watch over their supplies.¹

A controuling authority that may be termed absolute is vested in the Comité de Salut-Public, which is composed of the following Members, classed according to the influence which I think they respectively possess, Robespierre, Billaud de Varennes, Couthon, St Just, Barerre,² Jean Bon St André, Collot d'Herbois, Cambon, Carnot, Lindet, and Prieur.

Robespierre is certainly the apex of this pyramid — Barerre, in point of talents, may be regarded as its ablest support, — Lindet, whose application is distinguished where all are unremitting, is the Member, to whom the department of subsistence is devolved — St Just is very eloquent and impressive with the Convention — Jean Bon St André has been selected, for his energy, to regenerate their marine, and is now at Brest —

It is said that Billaud de Varennes and Carnot are to go to the army of the North — Collot d'Herbois and Couthon are very influential with the popular Societies — Prieur is less distinguished than either of his Colleagues.

The removal of Danton, La Croix,² and the other Deputies, who were executed with them, and the extinction of Hebert's² party, will give a stability to the power of this all influential Body, which nothing will be able to shake, and will enable them to call forth the remaining resources of this inexhaustible people, and to direct the application of them, if possible, more efficiently than they have yet done.

Since the recovery of Toulon the Marine has obtained great attention, and will, it is said, within a short time, be very respectable

Regulations for the government of the Navy, calculated to invigorate the discipline, have been lately enacted by the Convention, and are now in force — Every sea faring person, including the fishermen, are in requisition for public service.³

Viewed in the light I have here placed it, the picture of France is pleasing and splendid — but there are shades, which abstract from its beauty, and which a regard to truth makes necessary to confess, and to

¹ See decree of April 30, 1793, printed in Jomini's *Guerres de la Révolution*, I. 363 ff.

² Sic.

³ See reports of Saint-André and decrees reorganizing the navy in *Le Moniteur Universel* for February 5, 6, and 8, 1794.

expose — They proceed less from native defect than from accident, and may therefore be softened, perhaps be entirely removed.

In a course of conquest it is to be feared that the lust of dominion may lead this People, already the happiest Nation on the globe, in geographical position, to grasp at possessions, which, far from encreasing, would eventually abridge both their happiness and their power.

The retention of Savoy I regard as irrevocable — and, unless negotiations for peace are soon entered upon, I should consider the annexation of Austrian Flanders to the french Republic as neither improbable nor remote.

This conquest, should it be made, (and that a Nation of 28 millions of people, situated as France is, being compelled to become a nation of Soldiers, should, within a very short period, atchieve whatever conquest they attempt, is but too probable)

This conquest I say may be more susceptible of restitution, in exchange for her Islands — but even that I think would be doubtful, as, with the extension of her territory, her other means of obtaining their restoration must be dangerously encreased.

This is a case for the consideration of those, whom I have neither the power nor the wish to influence, but I am satisfied that more political reflection should attach to it, than they, to whom it is most interesting, seem disposed to give.

As inauspicious to the happiness of France and the peace of Europe, I can only regret the near possibility of such an event.

The difficulty of organising their government, after peace, would form a darker shade than it does, if we did not reflect that the Constitution is already prepared — that the nomination to office, and the knowledge which qualifies them to select characters, would be almost exclusively in the possession of the Comité de Salut Public — and that a long continuance in office has already designated the individuals for the stations, which they ought respectively to fill: This is, nevertheless, a Source of serious apprehension, as it regards the internal peace of France, and will be deserving of all the attention, which philosophy and philanthropy can bestow upon it.

To the lenient touch of time we must refer the obliteration of those remembrances, which may nourish individual enmities for some years to come — They will not extend beyond the present generation, perhaps they will be extinguished with the war that occasioned them. It is however to be confessed, and lamented that they cloud the prospect.

I am, my dear Sir, most respectfully, Your faithful and affectionate Servant

W JACKSON

To Thomas Pinckney Esquire Minister Plenipotentiary
of the United States of America at London.

[*Indorsement.*] Major Jackson's letter April 1794 to M^r T. Pinckney